



WIGTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

---oOo---

A N N U A L R E P O R T

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1943.

---oOo---

1.

STAFF OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT DURING 1943.

	<u>Date of Appointment.</u>
H. C. SIMPSON, L.M.S.S.A., D.P.H., M.S.A. Medical Officer of Health Also Assistant County Medical Officer	1/10/34. 1/9/26.
N. S. SPENCER, A.I.W.I., Certif. R.S.I..... Water Engineer, Sanitary Surveyor, Sanitary Inspector.	1/1/17.
J. R. MILLER, Certif. R.S.A. (Scot.), Certif..... Meat & Food Inspection R.S.A. (Scot.). Sanitary Surveyor, Sanitary Inspector.	1/11/35.
R. C. BLACKBURN, Certif. R.S.I. and S.I.E.J.B..... Housing Surveyor, Meat, Food & Sanitary Inspector.	1/8/36.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
WIGTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

--oOo--

Mr. Chairman, Lady & Gentlemen,

I beg to submit to you my tenth Annual Report upon the health of the Wigton Rural District for the year 1943. This report like those for other war years has been reduced to essential matters at the request of the Ministry of Health.

The vital statistics for 1943 are on the whole very satisfactory, the birth and infantile mortality rates are better than the average for other rural districts and for the whole county. The death rate was a little above the average but 67% of the deaths were of persons over 60 years of age and exactly half were 70 or over.

The lack of houses remains our most urgent problem and many hundreds of residents are having to submit to intolerable conditions due to gross overcrowding or defective dwellings which are not capable of being repaired.

As in former years the County M.O.H. and his staff and Dr. Faulds have continued to offer help and advice whenever it has been asked for, and to them and to the members and staff of the Wigton R.D.C. and the General Practitioners in the area I wish again to offer my sincere thanks for their active co-operation.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

HAROLD C. SIMPSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area of District in Acres	1943. 138,620.
Number of inhabited houses according to the Rate Books at the end of 1943	6,329.
Rateable Value	£105,417.
Amount represented by a penny rate.	£421.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE AREA.

		Total	M.	F.
<u>LIVE BIRTHS</u> - Legitimate	...	420.	237.	183.
Illegitimate.	...	28.	14.	14.
Total live births.	...	448.	251.	197.

Birth Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population. 19.7.

<u>STILL BIRTHS</u> - Legitimate	...	11.	4.	7.
Illegitimate	...	1.	-	1.
Total still Births	...	12.	4.	8.

Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births. 26.

DEATHS.

	Total	M.	F.
Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated population 12.8.	290.	152.	138.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes (P.Sepsis).

" " other maternal causes. 3 - 3

Death Rate of Infants under one year. (M.15 F.5 - Total 20)

All infants per 1,000 live births.	44.
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	35.
Illegitimate " " " illegitimate " "	71.

	Total.
Deaths from Cancer (All ages) (M.18 F.24)	42.
" " Measles " "	1.
" " Whooping Cough "	-
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years) (M.1 F.1)	2.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The number of deaths of infants under one year of age was 20 - (M.15 F.5) this being well below the average for the whole County of Cumberland and the second lowest on record in the Wigton R.D.

The causes of death were :-

Premature Birth	3)	11
Congenital Deformity etc.	8)	
Broncho Pneumonia	5	
Marasmus	2	
Bronchitis	2	
Convulsions	1	
Meningitis	1	

Total 20.

COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND.VITAL STATISTICS

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1943.

	Birth Rate.	Crude Death Rate.	Infantile Mortality Rate.
Administrative County of Cumberland.	17.4	12.3	48.
Urban Districts of Cumberland (including Boroughs of Workington and Whitehaven.	17.6	12.4	48.
Rural Districts of Cumberland.	17.0	12.3	48.
<u>Wigton Rural District.</u>	19.7	12.8	44.

The Registrar General has again decided to exclude the adjusted Death Rate.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING
THE YEAR 1943.

Disease	Total Cases Notified.	Deaths.
Smallpox	Nil.	-
Scarlet Fever	35.	-
Diphtheria	4.	1
Typhoid and Para-typhoid	Nil.	-
Pneumonia	18.	6
Erysipelas	7.	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2.	-
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	1.	-
Measles.	147.	1
Whooping Cough	93.	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	4.	-
Bacillary Dysentery	163.	-
Malaria	1.	-

TUBERCULOSIS

New cases of Tuberculosis - all forms - notified during 1943 with the deaths from this disease during the same period -

Age Group.	Pulmonary		New cases Non-Pulmonary.		Deaths.			
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 - 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	1
15 - 25	1	3	-	1	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	-
35 - 45	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
45 - 55	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
55 - 65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 and over.	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
All ages	3	4	1	5	3	4	1	1

Tuberculosis.

6.

	<u>New cases notified</u>			<u>Deaths.</u>	
	<u>Pulmonary</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Pulmonary</u>	<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>
<u>Pre-War Years.</u>					
1936	13	10	23	5	4
1937	11	10	21	8	4
1938	15	7	22	8	3
1939	20	7	27	9	4
<u>Average 1936-39</u>	<u>14.75</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>3.75.</u>
<u>War Years.</u>					
1940	10	5	15	10	2
1941	10	10	20	6	2
1942	18	13	31	4	4
1943	7	6	13	7	2
<u>Average 1940-43</u>	<u>11.25</u>	<u>8.5</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6.75</u>	<u>2.5</u>

The number of new cases notified in 1943 is the lowest yet recorded in the Wigton Rural District, and it will be noted that the average of both new cases and deaths, is, on the whole, lower for the four war years than in the 4 years preceeding the war.

Tuberculosis cases on the Local Register on
December 31st, 1943.

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Pulmonary	52	45	97
Non-Pulmonary	34	57	91
All forms of Tuberculosis	86	102	188

The above figures show an increase of 4 Non-Pulmonary cases as compared with 1942.

CANCER.

Cancer was responsible for 42 deaths (M.18 F.24) equal to a death rate of 1.8 per 1,000 population or approximately one death in every seven. The total deaths are about five above the average for the last six years.

On analysis the 38 deaths of which details are available were distributed according to age sex and site of disease as shown in the following table.

Site of Disease	Ages of Males	Ages of Females	Total
Bowel	46, 51, 54, 58, 70	47, 54, 70, 75, 77.	10.
Stomach	68, 79, 88.	70, 71, 77.	6.
Oesophagus	39, 60, 73.	-	3.
Liver	76.	56.	2.
Breast	-	45, 58, 62, 73.	4.
Uterus	-	55.	1.
Glands	69, 78.	-	2.
Lungs	62.	56.	2.
Larynx	-	48.	1.
Bladder	-	55, 66.	2.
Jaw	30.	-	1.
Cheek	75.	-	1.
Lip	68.	-	1.
Orbit	-	70.	1.
Bones	-	49.	1.
	18.	20.	38.

Average age at time of death. 67. 58.3 62.3

GENERAL PRACTITIONERS RETURNS.

As usual those returns have been received regularly and the following table shows the number of new non-notifiable infectious cases etc. which were seen by the General Practitioners in the area during 1943.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total	Average 1939 1942.
Chicken Pox.	4	10	2	3	13	14	14	8	22	-	6	-	96	152
Mumps.	19	21	2	-	-	3	1	1	2	-	1	-	49	126
Influenza	93	189	106	77	47	26	26	12	33	24	52	505	1195	941

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Diphtheria Immunisation was carried out as in previous years at all the rural schools in the area as well as at the clinics at Aspatia, Silloth and Wigton.

During the year 306 children under 5 years of age were given 2 doses of toxoid as also were 192 children between the ages of 5 and 15, making a total of 498 of all ages.

Since local immunisation first began in 1941, the total number of children who have been done is as under :-

Those who at the time of immunisation	
were under 5 years of age	1114.
Those between 5 and 15 years of age	3335.
Total immunised locally	4449.

According to the estimated number of children living in the Wigton Rural District it is considered that approximately 40% of the children under 5 years of age and 85% of children between 5 and 15 years of age have had two doses of toxoid. There are many who received one dose but did not return for a second one.

During the year there were 2 notified cases of Diphtheria in children under 15 years of age, one of them had not previously been immunised and had apparently acquired the disease outside the district and subsequently died therefrom. The other case was a very mild one and was really more of a carrier than an actual case.

CAUSES OF DEATH WITHIN THE WIGTON RURAL DISTRICT
DURING 1942 AS GIVEN BY THE REGISTRAR GENERAL.

<u>Cause of Death.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	
Diphtheria	1	-	1	
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	2	5	7	
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1	1	2	
Influenza	6	6	12	
Cancer of Oesophagus	5	-	5	
" " Stomach and Duodenum	2	7	9	
" " Uterus	-	1	1	42
" " Breast	-	3	3	
" " Other Sites	11	13	24	
Diabetes	2	-	2	
Inter Cranial Vascular Lesions	14	10	24	
Heart Disease	42	34	76	
Other Circulatory Diseases	8	11	19	
Bronchitis	6	9	15	
Pneumonia	5	1	6	
Other Respiratory Diseases	4	-	4	
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	-	1	
Diarrhoea (Under 2 years)	1	1	2	
Appendicitis	-	1	1	
Other Digestive Diseases	-	4	4	
Nephritis	4	7	11	
Other Maternal Causes	-	3	3	
Premature Births	1	2	3	
Congenital Malformations, Birth)	7	1	8	
Injuries, Infant Diseases)				
Suicide	2	1	3	
Road Traffic Accidents	2	1	3	
Other Violent Causes	6	2	8	
All other causes	13	14	32	
	<u>152</u>	<u>138</u>	<u>290</u>	
Corresponding figures for 1942	121	135	256	
" " " 1941	128	154	282	
" " " 1940	157	167	326	
" " " 1939	165	146	309	
1938	156	141	297	

OUTBREAK OF SONNE DYSENTERY.

On the evening of September 6th I received a telephone message from a general practitioner in Silloth informing me that during the previous few days he had been called in to see many cases of acute diarrhoea. I advised him to send several specimens of early cases to the laboratory for bacteriological examination and arranged to make a thorough investigation forthwith.

The following day accompanied by the Sanitary Inspector we began our enquiries and within a very short time all the evidence pointed very strongly to the outbreak being milk borne. Our interviews with the local doctors, who offered us every facility for the fullest investigation, showed that nearly all the cases of diarrhoea had their origin in houses which obtained their milk from one of the local dairies and this dairy received its milk supply from several local farms.

Visits were made to all the farms supplying milk into the town and the probable sources of infection were reduced to two farms. By this time a report had been received from Dr. Faulds (Pathologist at the Cumberland Infirmary) that the specimens sent for examination showed that the explosive outbreak of diarrhoea was due to Sonne Dysentery.

In order to stop all probable spread of the trouble I asked the Manager of the local Cinema to throw on the screen a request that all milk be boiled until further notice, this he did the same night and continued for as long as was considered necessary, and printed slips giving the same instructions were supplied to, and distributed by all the milk roundsmen to every house in the town.

I then reported the results of our enquiries to Dr. Faulds and arranged with him to come over the following day and continue investigations.

On September 9th we visited the two farms X and Y which seemed to be the most likely source of the trouble and also the dairy which retailed the milk. At each place Dr. Faulds took rectal swabs from all who came in contact with the cans or the milk etc.

At farm X the farmer and his man were found to be negative and there was no history of diarrhoea on the farm.

At farm Y in addition to the farmer and his wife there were several young children and eight men and women working on the farm, but some of them had nothing to do with the production of milk - this was during harvest time.

Rectal swabs were taken from one of the children who still had diarrhoea and from everyone else on the farm. There was a history of diarrhoea on the farm going back for 2 or 3 weeks.

In due course a report was received to the effect that the child and four of the others working in the dairy or assisting with the milk etc. were positive (i.e. that the bacteria of Sonne Dysentery had been isolated from the specimens taken by Dr. Faulds). A sample of milk taken from a jug in the kitchen also showed a heavy growth of this organism. I was informed later that a dead mouse (presumably drowned) had been found at the bottom of this jug at the end of the day. This does not disprove the fact that the milk was infected but rather that even the mice on the farm might be carrying the disease on their feet !!

Of six swabs taken from workers in the retail dairy, where the milk was bottled, two were positive, both patients had been suffering from diarrhoea for five days, i.e. quite a recent infection.

Arrangements were forthwith made for the distribution of all raw milk from this farm to be discontinued, and the supply to the retail dairy was pasteurised for several weeks until negative swabs had been obtained from the workers in the farm dairy, and it was considered safe for the unpasteurised milk to be distributed again.

On the day of our visit we found that the shed which should only have been used for sterilizing the milk utensils, parts of milking machine etc. was, contrary to the Milk and Dairies Order, being used as a family wash house and soiled childrens and adults clothing was lying in a heap on the floor awaiting washing, while a few feet away hanging on the wall, were the essential parts of the milking machine.

SYMPTOMS. The symptoms varied a great deal in severity but the majority had some abdominal pain - very severe at times - together with diarrhoea (with blood and mucus) and often vomiting and sometimes a high temperature.

A considerable number of cases were quite mild and recovered completely in a few days while others were severe and lasted for a week or more.

It is not possible to give full details of the age and sex distribution but this outbreak was no respecter of either age or sex, and notified cases were as young as 5 months and as old as 93 years.

NOTIFICATIONS. Many of these Dysentery notifications were late in coming in owing to the fact that all the Doctors were more or less swamped with the extra work of looking after their patients.

The earliest notifications received were on September 13th, but they all dated back a week or more.

The total number of notifications received were 162 spread over five weeks as shown below, but this figure does not by any means represent the total persons affected as the majority of the mild cases did not consult a doctor and there were certainly more than 300 cases altogether.

The following figures show the dates of the onset of the actual cases notified :-

During the week ending September 4th	-	53 cases
" " " 11th	-	71 cases
" " " 18th	-	12 cases
" " " 25th	-	21 cases :X:
" " October 2nd	-	5 cases
" " " 9th	-	Nil.

:X: No dates of commencement of the disease were given in these cases and it is almost certain that most of them began to be unwell during the previous 2 - 3 weeks.

It is interesting to note that at least a fortnight before we got the first positive result one general practitioner was suspicious of the cause of several cases of diarrhoea in his practice and sent 2 - 3 specimens to the Laboratory for examination. Unfortunately the specimens sent were from cases which had had diarrhoea for several days, and as is common in such cases the specimens were negative, which had they been taken on the first or second day, would most probably have been positive, and thus given us a much earlier indication of the cause of the outbreak.

CONCLUSIONS.

1. A sudden and acute outbreak of Sonne Dysentery in Silloth was due to an infected milk supply.
2. The boiling of all milk and later the pasteurisation of that supplied by the affected farm rapidly brought the outbreak to an end and prevented further spread.
3. The staff of the retail dairy had been infected by drinking milk from the farm.
4. With the possible exception of the fact that the sterilizing house was also being used as a washhouse there is no evidence of carelessness or neglect on the part of any of the staffs connected with the production and distribution of milk in Silloth. Nobody on the infected farm had any suspicion that they were the possible cause of the outbreak and they are still unconvinced that their milk was responsible for it.

5. This outbreak shows how very important it is for all persons engaged in milk and food production generally to report any illness or sickness among the staff, otherwise there is a grave risk of spreading disease.

MILK SAMPLING.

The following figures etc. relating to the Wigton R.D. have been taken from the Annual Report of the County M.O.H. for 1943.

	T.T.	Accredited.	Total Graded Milk.	Ungraded Milk.
No. of Graded Licences in force at end of 1942.	8	69	77	-
No. of Samples taken.	34	308	342	79
No. of Samples reaching Accredited Standard.	20 (59%)	164 (53%)	184 (54%)	43 (54%)
No. of Samples below Accredited Standard.	14 (41%)	144 (47%)	158 (46%)	36 (46%)

Compared with 1942 the satisfactory T.T. samples show a fall of 5% and the accredited a fall of 6% and the ungraded a rise of 4%. It is interesting to note that the percentages of satisfactory samples for the graded and ungraded milk is exactly the same.

During the year there was a fall of 13 in the number of accredited licences issued, the number of T.T. licences being the same as the previous year. A larger number of samples were taken during 1943, but they were nearly all of ungraded milks.

The number of cases of Tuberculosis etc. detected on veterinary examination or reported otherwise are as under :-

	1943.	1942.	1941.	1940.
Tuberculous samples of milk.	8	7	2	6
Tuberculosis of udder.	7	6	8	9
Chronic cough etc.	5	12	11	10
Atrophy, Mastitis, Induration) non T.B.etc.	45	77	71	65
Total	65	102	92	90

WATER.

Aspatia and Silloth Scheme. These Works continue to yield an excellent quality of water as indicated in Pathologists Report dated 13th September, 1943.

"A soft water very free from bacterial contamination.

A pure and wholesome supply".

The deficiency in pressure in parts of Aspatia, and in Hayton Parish, has been satisfactorily overcome by acquiring the joint use of Prospect Water Tower which now operates to balance out the periods of low pressure.

Eastern & Western Scheme. During the year, chlorination has been applied to both the Townthwaite and Greenfoot sources, the new plant in each case being of the sodium-hypochlorite type.

During the early stages of chlorination, particularly in mains carrying unfiltered and untreated water, some occurrence of unpleasant taste is inevitable, owing to the action of chlorine on the vegetable matter lying in the mains.

This stage now appears to have been passed, and no such complaints are now received.

On both sources, Pathologists Reports show elimination of bacteria by chlorination and merit the following opinion,

Greenfoot "A highly satisfactory water".

Townthwaite "Bacteriologically this is a highly satisfactory water."

Northern Parishes Supply. (in bulk from Carlisle). Conditions in Bowness and Cardurnock areas remain very unsatisfactory owing to extended periods of low pressure.

Wigton Town Supply. Conditions on this scheme remain unchanged.

The water is taken into the mains unfiltered and untreated, from three spring sources, one of which is consistently good, while the other two are fairly good in dry weather, but are heavily contaminated after rain.

This is reflected in a series of examinations made monthly from January to June 1943 which give reports varying from "a good domestic supply", to "chemically, a moderately hard water of good character, but shows too much bacterial contamination to be passed as a public supply".

These unsatisfactory conditions are no worse than must have been experienced for the past 70 years, but the proposed Improvement Scheme for this supply should be carried out at the earliest possible opportunity.

Caldbeck and Heskot Supply. This district jogs along with a scheme of sorts, made up of an odd assortment of earthenware and iron pipes which manage to deliver some water to the villages in very limited quantity for drinking purposes. It is hoped, however, that at the end of the war, a scheme will be carried out, adequate for all the requirements of the district.

MEAT INSPECTION.

I am indebted to Mr. Blackburn for the following comments and statistics on this important aspect of the work of the Health Department.

Another year of centralized slaughtering under the auspices of the Ministry of Food has passed, and I have again endeavoured, on behalf of the Council, to afford that co-operation which the Ministry of Health asked of Local Authorities at the beginning of the war when this scheme was introduced.

The number of casualty animals sent to the Abattoir for slaughter entails a great deal of unseen work. Instead of post mortem inspections being restricted to certain days, visits are necessary practically every day, which means that other work has to accommodate the demands of the Abattoir.

This has been possible so far, though certainly not within the compass of ordinary office hours or even days, but I am afraid such service will prove increasingly difficult to maintain as post war plans and schemes, which must inevitably fall heavily on this Department, gradually unfold themselves.

The small slaughtering establishments probably entail the greatest hardship in this respect, as the larger Abattoirs carry a full-time Inspectorate.

TABLE NO. 1.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle (excluding Cows).	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs.
Number killed	576	186	257	7,572	128
Number inspected	576	186	257	7,572	128
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis.</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned.	4	4	7	52	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned.	219	87	4	335	11
Percentage of the number inspec- ted affected with disease other than Tuberculosis.	38.7	48.9	4.3	5.1	9.4
<u>Tuberculosis Only.</u>					
Whole carcasses condemned	10	10	5	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	80	22	2	-	3
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	15.6	17.2	2.7	-	2.3

TABLE NO. 2.

COMPARATIVE TABLE.

	<u>Total Weight of Meat Condemned.</u>	<u>Carcasses Inspected.</u>
1940	22,406 lbs.	4,398.
1941	25,936 lbs.	9,015.
1942	25,298 lbs.	9,236.
1943	24,919 lbs.	8,719.

TABLE NO. 3.

The principal grounds of condemnation were as follows :-

Bovines.

Tuberculosis	12,505 lbs.
Cirrhosis	2,558 lbs.
Fevered condition	2,342 lbs.
Bruising	1,017 lbs.
Emaciation	823 lbs.
Decomposition	804 lbs.
Septicaemia	565 lbs.
Mastitis	437 lbs.
Wet and Ill set condition	148 lbs.
Actinomycosis	141 lbs.
Pneumonia	80 lbs.

Sheep.

Emaciation	707 lbs.
Bruising and Broken legs	526 lbs.
Parasitic	475 lbs.
Moribund condition	367 lbs.
Post mortem Putrefaction	256 lbs.
Fevered condition	220 lbs.
Pneumonia & Pleurisy	202 lbs.
Wet and Ill set condition	83 lbs.
Arthritis	54 lbs.
Jaundice	45 lbs.
Uræmia	52 lbs.

Pigs.

Emaciation	130 lbs.
Tuberculosis	79 lbs.
Urticaria	70 lbs.
Bruising and Broken Legs	48 lbs.
Arthritis	18 lbs.

The following other items of food were condemned during the year :-

Assorted Foodstuffs	304 lbs.
Canned Meat	246 lbs.
Wet Fish	112 lbs.
Canned Milk	97 lbs.
" Fruit	65 lbs.
" Vegetables	8 lbs.

